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A
S E R M O N
P R E A C H E D

To the Honourable
HOUSE OF COMMONS,
At their late solemn Fast, Wed-
nesday, December 27.

1643.

B. Y

1583-1646
ALEXANDER HENDERSON,
Minister at Edenbrugh.

N U M. 21. 14.

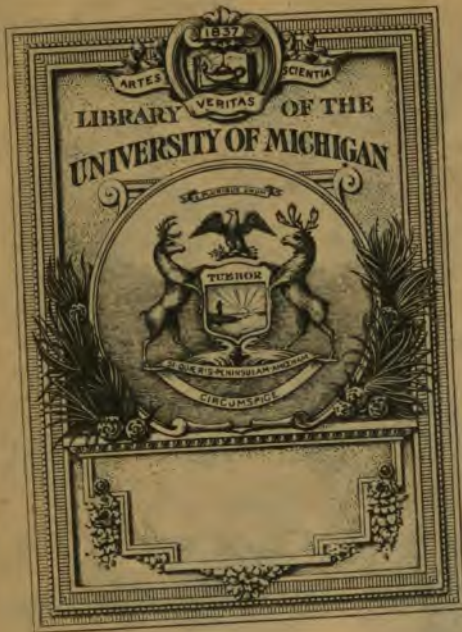
wherefore it is said in the booke of the warres of the
Lord, what he did in the red Sea, and in the brookes
of Arnon.

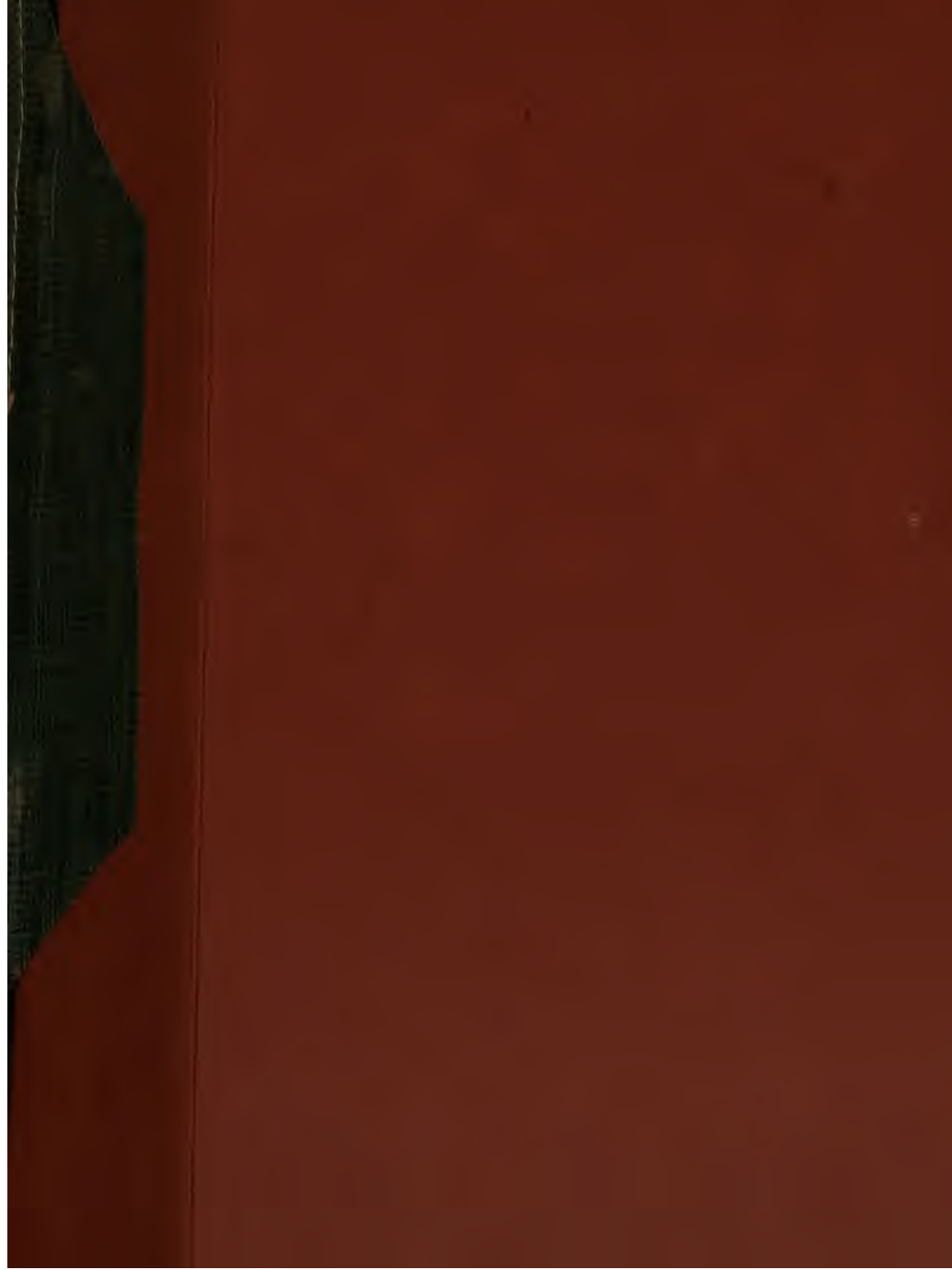
Published by Order of the House.



LONDON:

Printed for Robert Bosstock, dwelling at
the signe of the Kings-head in Pauls
Churchyard. 1644.







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A SERMON PREACHED

To the Honourable
HOUSE OF COMMONS,
At their late solemn Fast, Wed-
nesday, *December 27.*

1643.

B. Y

1583-1646

ALEXANDER HENDERSON,
Minister at *Edenburgh.*

NUM. 21. 14.

*wherefore it is said in the booke of the warres of the
Lord, what he did in the red Sea, and in the brookes
of Arnon.*

Published by Order of the House.



LONDON:

Printed for *Robert Bostock*, dwelling at
the signe of the Kings-head in *Pauls*
Churchyard. 1644.

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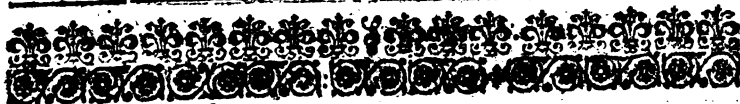
Die Mercurij 27. Decemb. 1643.

IT is this day Ordered by the Commons assembled in Parliament, that Master Solicitor doe from this House give thanks unto Master Henderson for the great paines he tooke in the Sermon he preached this day, at the intreaty of this House, at Saint Margarets Westminster; being the day of publike Humiliation; and to desire him to Print his Sermon. It is also Ordered that none shall presume to Print his Sermon without being authorized under his hand writing.

Hen. Elsynge Cler. Parl. D. Com.

I appoint Robert Bosstocke to Print my Sermon,

Alexander Henderson.



To the R E A D E R.



HIS Sermon, such as it is, was preached to the honourable house of Commons at their desire, and is now by their Order printed for thy use, and, by the blessing of God, for thy benefit. The desire & endeavour of the Preacher was, according to the scope and nature of the Text, to shew, that after so often rennewed and long continued humiliation; and after solemn entering into Covenant with the most high God, The true reformation of Religion, is the readiest meane to turne away the still pressing wrath of God from the Kingdome, And to bring the desired blessings of all sorts upon Church and State; which yet will prove but unnessefull, unlesse the Reformation intended by the Honourable Houses of Parliament and the reverend Assembly of Divines be attended & faithfully followed with Renovation and Repentance in the people: Repentance for every knowne Sin (and how can Sin be unknowne in the midst of so many burning and shining lights?)

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Printed by J. Sturges, at the ...

lights ?) But repentance especially for sinnes in
the matter of Religion, the present Epidemicall
disease of this Land, which threatneth changes &
Armies of sorrowes ; so it pleaseth the Lord to
give more then a taste of the bitter fruits of bad
Church-government and a sad representation of
the face of the Kingdom, if every man should be left
to preach, professe and print what he will. O that
my people had harkned unto me, & Israel had
walked in my ways! I should soon have subdued
their Enemies, and turned my hand against
their adversaries. The haters of God, should
have submitted themselves unto him; but their
time should have endured for ever. Hearken
therefore unto the voyce of God in the spirituall,
plaine and powerfull preaching of his servants
(one of the greatest evidences that the Lord hath
a purpose of mercy toward you) and walke in his
wayes. Marke them which cause divisions and
offences amongst you; be wise unto that which
is good, & simple concerning evill; & the God
of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet
shortly. The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
be with you.

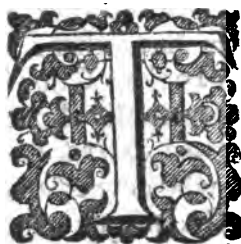


A S E R M O N

Preached at the late Fast, before the
Honourable House of Commons.

E Z R A 7. 23.

*Whatsoever is commanded by the God of
heaven, let it be diligently done, for the house
of the God of heaven; for why should there
be wrath against the Realme of the King and
his Sonnes?*



HE Lord, who is the Father of The Lord
Spirits, hath a great diversity of worketh di-
influence and operation, upon versly upon
the minds and hearts of the chil- the hearts of
dren of men; he can send a dream men.
upon *Nebuchadnezar*, while he
is at rest in his house and flourish-
ing in his palace, which maketh him afraid and the
thoughts upon his bed, and the visions of his head

- a* Dan. 4. 4. to trouble him *a*. While *Belsazzar* the King maketh a great feast to a thousand of his Lords, he can make a hand to write over against the Candlestick upon the plaister of the Wall, which maketh the Kings countenance to be changed, and his thoughts to trouble him; so that the joynts of his loynes were loosed, his knees smote one against another, and his wife men and Lords were astonied with him *b*: he can make *Balaam*, when he is called to curse the people of God, contrary to his owne intention & the desire of *Balaak*, to blesse them three times *c*: He can make *Cajephas* to prophesie what he understandeth not, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole Nation perish not *d*: And the Lord can reveale his will to *Joseph*, *Daniel*, and his Prophets, concerning things to come for the comfort of his Church *e*. Againe, the Lord can renew the hearts of his Enemies, and make such a Persecutor, as *Paul* somerime was, to be a beleever and Zealous Preacher *f*: He can restraine the impetuous violence of the heart of man; thus dealt he with *Laban*, that he durst not speake to *Jacob* either good or bad *g*; he can also and doth indeed overrule the hearts and wayes of his most Malignant and desperate Enemies, whom he neither reneweth nor restraineth, and contrary to their Counsels and intentions, bring them marvelously about to his owne ends, as he dealt with *Judas*, *Herod*, *Pilate*, and the people of the Jewes, who devised and did mischief against Christ, but God meant it for good, to save his people from their sinnes *h*. There is yet another way of divine providence and Sovereignty,

raignity, when the Lord is pleased neither to proceed so farre as to renew, nor doe so little as to re-
 straine, but thinketh meet to change the affections
 of the heart of man; whether from particular ha-
 tred and opposition, as he dealt with *Eſau* com-
 ming against *Jacob*, and *Alexander* the great, ^{i Gen. 33.}
 marching against *Jerusalem*, or from that com-
 mon and innate hatred that all men naturally beare ^{k Joseph antiq. Judaic. lib. 11. c. 8.}
 against the true Religion and Church of God: Of
 which we have the example of *Abaſbuerus* in the
 booke of *Eſter*, of *Artaxerxes* in the booke of *Ne-
 hemiah*, of *Cyrus* and *Darius* in this booke, and of
 the same *Artaxerxes* in this Text: In whose eyes
Ezra did find such favour, and of whom he had
 as ample testimonie of royall benevolence and
 bounry toward *Jerusalem* and the house of God
 there, as his heart could have wished, and as made
 him humbly to acknowledge, that the good hand of
 the Lord his God was upon him, and to blesse the
 Lord God of his fathers, which had put such a thing
 in the Kings heart, as to beautifie the house of the
 Lord God which was at *Jerusalem*. In the letter of
Artaxerxes expressing his munificence, and contain-
 ing the Commission and instructions given unto
Ezra for this purpose; the clause which I have read
 is worthy of a starre or finger in the margent,
 wherein we may perceive, that the King as he had
 heard and learned not from a flattering Court-
 Chaplaine, but from faithfull *Ezra*, beleeveth, that
 the great wrath of God, shall come not onely upon
 himselfe, but which was more, upon his Kingdome
 and Posterity; if Religion should not be serled,

and the house of God ordered with all speed and diligence in every thing, as God himselſe had commanded.

The Text divided.

If we will looke more distinctly upon the Order not of the words, but of the matter, we shall meet with three particulars fitting the present condition of affaires, and very worthy our gravest consideration: The first is the great evil to be avoyded, even the greatest of all evils, *The wrath of God against the Realme of the King and his Sonnes.*

The second is, the meane which is the chiefeſt of all meanes, and without which no other meane can be effectually for averting or preventing of wrath, *whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done, for the house of the God of heaven.*

The third is, the connexion of the one and the other, or the inference of the effect from the cause: *For why should there be wrath? &c.* When that is not diligently done for the house of the God of Heaven, which the God of Heaven commandeth, then is there wrath against the Realme of the King and his Sonnes.

Would the Lord, who is so rich in wisdom and can use so many powerfull wayes of dealing with the heart of man, be pleased to put it in the Kings heart, to write such a letter and send forth such an Edict as this is, it would be the opening of a doore of hope; or as good *Scheshaniah* saith^l, *there would be now hope in Israel concerning this thing*: That the horrible deluge of wrath which now overrunneth this Land, should be awaged, the Fountains also of the depth, and the windowes of Heaven would be

be stopped, the *Arke* would rest, the *Dove* would come with an *Olive-leaf* in her mouth; we would all joyn in offering a Sacrifice of thanksgiving, the Lord would smell a favour of rest, and we should see a new world wherein should dwell righteousness and peace. Amongst all the great things which the honourable Houses of Parliament have done, there is none more acceptable to God, or more promiseth peace and happiness to this Land, then that a Church-assembly is called, for searching into the will of the God of Heaven, *that whatsoever is commanded by him may be diligently done.* The wrath of the Lord hath raged for many yeeres in *Germany* and is not yet abated, because nothing is done there for Reformation of Religion, and building of the house of God. But there be three things in *England* which give us hope and promise deliverance. First, Your frequent and continued fasting and humiliation. Secondly, Your entring into a solemne Covenant with God for obtaining mercy. Thirdly, Your begun Reformation, and the course You have taken for perfecting the same, *That whatsoever is commanded by the God of Heaven may be diligently done for the house of the God of Heaven.* If these three be performed in truth, You may expect a blessing: True humiliation, Covenanting with God, and Reformation, are the Harbingers of peace and happiness: But when they are not in truth, the hypocrisie threatneth more then the performance promiseth.

Concerning the great evil to be avoyded, which is the wrath of the God of Heaven, although it be

The wrath of
God laid open

m Psal. 103.

Rom. 1. 18.

Deut. 32. 22.

In the height
and depth
thereof.

infinite and above all dimension unmeasurable, as it is in the infinite and incomprehensible God, yet according to our capacity and the matter in hand, it is expressed and set before our eyes in the dimensions thereof. In the *m* Psalme 103. we have the dimensions of the infinite mercy of God, the height and the depth thereof, according to the height of heaven; or as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that feare him: and like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that feare him: the breadth as farre as the East is from the West, so farre hath he removed our transgressions from us: and the length, The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting to them that feare him, and his righteousness unto his Childrens Children. In this place We have the like dimensions of his anger against them that use not the power which God hath given them, for setting his feare and worship according to his owne will: The height and depth thereof is in the word *wrath*, which is a boyling and burning anger, and this is the wrath of God revealed from heaven, and burning to the lowest hell; The breadth is, where it is not said against the King, but the kingdom of the King; and the length of it is, the Sons & Posterity of the King to all generations.

To speake a word of these three severally: First, we know that the words used in Scripture to denote the wrath of God against his Enemies, doe expresse humane affections and bodily passions, which are not in him who is nor like unto man; But the thing intended is the Lord his most holy dislike and serious

ous detestation of sinne, with his most just and constant will and decree to punish the same : His Comminations and threats declaring his dislike and decree, and his judgements and vengeance which are the executing of his threatnings. This execution of wrath is principally meant in this place, and yet it is not called the wrath of God, but simply (*wrath*) thereby shewing the greatnesse and immensity of the wrath of God ; that there is no wrath comparable with his wrath, and therefore no wrath so formidable as his wrath. For first, all other wrath of Man or Angell is but the limited wrath of the creature, but his wrath is infinite like himself; as the man is, so is his wrath, and as God is, so is his wrath : The wrath of a King is like the roaring of a young Lyon, but the roaring of the Lyon of the Tribe of *Judah* is more terrible ; look how much the Wisdome, the Power, the Justice, the Mercy of God are greater then the Wisdome, the Power, the Justice, the mercy of man, so much is the wrath of God greater then the wrath of man. Secondly, the wrath of God reacheth to the soule as well as to the body ; to Kingdomes as well as to particular persons or Families ; to the posterity as well as to the present generation ; it being accompanied with omnipotency to which all things are alike, easie and faisible. Thirdly, the greatnesse of his anger appeareth in this ; that he is the Lord of Hosts, when the Heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them ^{Gen. 2. 1.} then and not before did God the maker of all things take upon him the name of the Lord ^{Gen. 2. 4.} *verse 4.*

After

After he had made all things by his word, and set them in order, he commandeth and rulerh all by his authority; he hath them all ready to execute his will; they are all his Host and Souldiers, from the Angels, Sunne, Moone and Starres, unto the smallest Flies and Wormes; and when he giveth the alarme to the least of them, the greatest on earth are not able to resist.

Use I.

The Use of this may be two-fold: One is against the wicked; since in these three respects there is no wrath comparable to the wrath of God, no wrath is so much to be feared as his wrath. Vengeance belongeth to me, I will recompence saith the Lord; and againe, the Lord shall judge his people; It is a fearfull thing to fall into the hands of the living God; although it be much better for the Godly to fall into the hands of God, whose mercies are great and who in judgement remembreth mercy, then into the hands of men whose mercies are cruel; and it were more tolerable for them to have the pestilence then the sword raging in the Land; yet the wicked shall find that it had beene more easie for them to fall into the hands of men then into the hands of God, who both killeth the body and destroyeth their temporall being, & casteth both soul and body into the fire of hel; *For the Lord whose name* is jealous *is a jealous God*; and which is very proper for such as at this time flatter themselves in their owne wickednesse; *The Lord will not spare him, but the anger of the Lord and his jealousie shall smooke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this booke shall lye upon him, and the Lord shall*

Heb. 10.
30. 31.

2 Sam. 24.
14.

Exod. 34. 14.

shall blot out his name from under Heaven *f*. To *f* Deut. 29. 20.
 which that of the Prophet is very agreeable; Then
 shall mine anger be accomplished, and I will cause my
 fury to rest upon them, and I will be comforted. The *f* Ezek. 5. 16.
 wicked amongst the people of God, who blesse
 themselves in their owne hearts, saying; We shall
 have peace, though we walk in the imaginations of
 our owne hearts; are the naturall element for the
 curses and judgements of God, which are moving
 to and fro, to lye and rest in, and when the curses
 and judgements of the Lord come upon them, the
 Lord is at rest and is comforted, and his people
 that feare his name and tremble at his judgements,
 are also at rest and are comforted.

Another use is for the Godly, who in some *Use 2.*
 similitude and conformity with the wrath of the jea-
 lous God, should stirre up in themselves their zeal
 and just indignation against false worship, and the
 contempt of the true worship of his name. When
 Moses did behold the Idolatry of the people in the
 golden Calfe, his Zeale was so strong and he so
 impatient, that he brake the Tables written with
 Gods owne hand. *I have beene very jealous for the* *Exod. 32.*
Lord God of Hosts, saith Elias; For the Children of *1 Kin. 19. 10*
Israel have forsaken thy Covenant, thrown down thine
Altars, and slaine thy Prophets with the sword. when
Paul came to Athens and saw the City wholly given to
Idolatry, his spirit was stirred in him, and a Pa-
roxisme like a fit of a feaver did take him. *y. Acts 17. 16.*
 And when Lot was at Sodome, he vexed his righteous soul
 from day to day with their unlawfull deeds, his soule
 was tormented within him. You must not any *Pet. 2. 8.*
 lon-

longer be lukewarme like Laodicea, neither hot nor
a Rev. 3. 16. colda, but (according to the fervent anger ascribed
b Rom. 12. 11. here to God) *fervent in spirit serving the Lord*.
 When we are lukewarme in the matters of God,
 then doth the wrath of God wax hot, and when we
 are fervent and zealous, then doth his anger cease
 and the fire of his wrath is extinguished.

In the bredth
 thereof.

The second is, the object of his wrath, or the
 bredth unto which it is extended: *The Realme of the
 King*: he saith not upon the King, or upon the
 King of the Kingdome, but upon the Kingdome of
 the King; and thus he expresth himselfe upon
 two grounds, or for two reasons: The one is; be-
 cause he knew that for his fault the people might
 suffer: The other is; that he looked more to the
 suffering of the people, then to any thing that
 could befall himselfe. No question he had learned
 from *Ezra* and others of his spirit (so good and ne-
 cessary a thing is it, that *Ezraes* and *Nehemiahs* be
 about Kings, such prove indeed as their names im-
 ply, helpers and comforters both to King and peo-
 ple) that Kingdomes suffers sometimes for the sins
 of their Kings and Rulers; a truth not unknowne
 unto naturall men. It is also true that Kings some-
 times suffer for the sinnes of the people: *For the
 transgression of a Land many are the Princes thereof.*
If you shall still doe wickedly, saith *Samuel* to the
 people; *ye shall be consumed, both you and your
 King.* But all the debate is in the application;
 for Kings many times justifie themselves, that the
 people suffer not for their sinnes, but for their
 owne; and the people are as ready to justifie them-
 selves,

Selves, that Kings suffer not for their finnes but for their owne; and when wrath is upon both, both are ready to stand to their owne defence, and to plead their innocency: But the true determination is, that no man or multitude suffereth but for that sinne, which some way is their owne sinne, and whereof they themselves are guilty: When *David* numbred the people, & the people were punished, the people were punished for their owne finnes; both their former finnes which the Lord at this time did take occasion to call to remembrance; and their present sinne in consenting to the numbering of the people; for had they beene all unwilling as *Joab* was, and had not consented, they had not sinned. Kings should not be permitted to commit such publike finnes, but Councell, Parliament, People, and every one according to his place and power should hinder them. It may displease them for the present, but afterward it shall be no griefe nor offence of heart unto them, either that they have shed blood causlesse, or have avenged themselves, as *Abigail* said to *David* ¹; yet *David* ² *Sam. 27.* said truly, it was his sinne, both because it did beginne at him, and he was the principall Agent in it; and because he gave the provocation at this time, and his sinne was the match that set on fire the wrath of God, which was ready before to be kindled against the people for their finnes. It is a miserable debate betwixt a King and a people, when in the time of a publike judgement, both of them stand to their owne innocency, and the one accuseth the other of guiltinesse: But it is a sweet contest

and promiserh much mercy and comfort : when the Prince saith ; I have sinned and done wickedly, but what hath the people done ? and when the people say, we have sinned and done wickedly, and thereby have drawne wrath upon our selves. Although at this time the Kings Majesty, when he sees so many of the poore people fall to the ground, so much blood spilt, should be moved in his heart to say as *David* said, I have sinned:: Yet yee that are his Subjects, each one in his owne place, should confesse your owne sinnes, and justifie the Lords doing, for yee are guilty ; first, of many sinnes before this time, especially that you have not called and endeavoured so earnestly as yee ought for Reformation of Religion, that every thing might have beene done in the house of God according to his own wil ; but have pleased your selves with, and have rested in the beginnings of a Reformation ; yee have been for the greater part more pleased with things which were not reformed, then the things which were reformed in the worship of God ; and this sinne hath beene the cause of many other sinnes, for where God is not served aright, all other duties are but neglected or performed without sincerity. Secondly, for the present, this is the sinne of the Land, that the people have not according to their power stayed the King from shedding of blood, but many have joyned their Counsels and endeavours to begin and encrease the common misery, and others have not resisted the evil, but suffered the sword to rage, which may make the people justly to say, *we have sinned and done wickedly.*

The

The third is, the length of this wrath; for it reaches to the Kings Sonnes and so to the Posterity. In the length thereof.

The wrath of God endeth not at the persons that have sinned, but is extended to others that descend of them, without respect of persons, and especially for sinnes about the house and worship of God. For the horrid and blasphemous murmuring of *Israel*, when they repented themselves of their comming out of *Egypt*, and said one to another, let us make a Captaine and let us returne into *Egypt*; not onely their own carkasses fel in the *Wildernes*, but their Children which had not murmured, yea which were not yet born must wander in the *Wildernesse* forty yeers, and beare their whoredomes g. Numb. 14

In like manner in the seventy yeeres of the captivity of *Babylon*, the Children that were borne in *Babylon*, or were carried from their owne Land, suffered in that captivity a world of miseries for the sinnes of their Parents. The examples of the Children of *Dathan* and *Abiram*, of the first borne of *Egypt*; of the young ones in *Sodome*, that had not sinned after the similitude of the transgression of *Adam*; and many other judgements of God, plucking up root and branch, prove this to be the manner of the Lords proceeding against sinners, and that without respect of persons: The greater the persons be, the more grievous in the justice of God is the punishment; because the sinnes of great ones are not onely sinnes, but examples of sinning, and proclamations of liberty to inferiours; and therefore *I will be glorified in Pharaoh and in his servants* &c, saith the Lord. For the sinne of *Saul* Exod. 14

i 2 Sam. 12.
9. 10.

in slaying the Gibeonites, there was not onely a famine in the dayes of *David*, three yeers yeere after yeere, but seven of his sonnes also were hanged up in *Gibeon*. *David* himselfe was not spared, but because he had slaine *Uriah* the Hittite with the sword of the Children of *Ammon*; *Nathan* said, the sword shall not depart from thine house because thou hast despised me: And afterward when his sinne was pardoned, because he had given great occasion to the Enemies of God to blaspheme, the Child also that is borne unto him shall surely dye. This course the Lord doth after a speciall manner follow in sinnes about his house and worship; and therefore in the second command and no other doth the Lord threaten to visit the sinnes of the Fathers upon the Children. The reasons why the Lord doth so; are first, that all the world may know, how much the Lord abhorreth sinne, especially in matters of his worship. To this purpose it is observable what he saith, *Exod. 32. 34. In the day when I visit I will visit their sinne upon them*: So often as he punished the people and their posterity for other sinnes he remembred, their sinne of Idolatry, which gave occasion to the saying, That in every plague of *Israel* there was one ounce of the golden Calf. Secondly, that men may abstaine from sinnes of this sort, not onely for respect to themselves, but to their posterity, whom they love so tenderly, and of whom they are often more carefull then of themselves. And this he doth to the *third and fourth generation*, that both the Parents themselves and others who are witnesses to the sinnes

sinnes of the Parents, may be sensible of Gods dealing, and know that the Lord is just, and the avenger of sinne. I leave the theologicall discourse in vindicating the justice of God, onely I say; first, that the Lord punisherh no man with eternall wrath for his fathers sinnes, but the soule that sinneth suffereth in that kind. Secondly, that the ungodly and wicked posterity cannot open their mouth against the justice of God, since they continue in the iniquity of their fathers. Thirdly, that the Godly when they are visited in their bodies, goods, or estates which they have from their Fathers, will find these visitations to be indeed *indicia peccati non judicia propter peccatum*, and rather medicines and preservatives for their eternall happinessse then wrath for their destruction.

And I come to the use; that in this nicke of time and joynture of affaires, the great wisdome which God hath given you in your publike places, be stirred up and exercised, in taking heed that all the former sinnes of this Land committed by so many Progenitors, be not brought upon this Generation, according to that fore and sad sentence pronounced by the Sonne of God against Jerusalem, *Matth. 23. 35. That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias, Sonne of Barachias whom yee slew between the Temple & the Altar*; and verse 36. *Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this Generation.* Yee cannot preserve all particular persons from the judgments due unto them for their own, and for their fathers

Use.

Matth. 23. 35.

thers sinnes ; nor can yee preserve every Family from the wrath which the present and preceding generations have been treasuring up. It appeareth that the Lord hath decreed the destruction of some persons, and the extirpation of some Families : But it is in your hands to prevent the desolation of the Church and Kingdome. The Jewes filled up the measure of their Fathers, by crucifying the Sonne of God when he came amongst them and would have wrought a Reformation, and therefore their habitation was left desolate, and they are no more a Nation nor a Kingdome unto this day : It is true the people were executioners, but the Rulers were the prime Agents. Doe therefore the worke unto which the Lord hath called You, and Yee shall save the Kingdome from this wrath : It is in Your hands as Instruments to make the posterity blessed, and to blesse You for your faithfulnessse. Woe to them that leave their Station in such an exigence ; they doe what they can to bring all the blood and all the finnes of former times upon this Generation, and to make the Posterity miserable. Let others professe or pretend what they will, I am assured, that such as are faithfull in their places, are upon the right way to save the Kingdome, the King, and the Kings Sonnes from wrath.

The meanes
to avert and
prevent the
wrath of God

Now there is nothing more necessary, nothing we should desire more earnestly to know, then by what means this great wrath of the great God maybe prevented where it is imminent & feared, or averted wher it is incumbent & felt; & to what end doth the Lord threaten

threaten his wrath, to what purpose doth he make it
 smoke, and in part to break forth in a flame, but that
 the means may be used to turn it away, that the fulnesse
 thereof come not upon us. We will find three sorts
 of means practised in the books of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*,
 and of the Prophets their contemporaries. The first
 was publick fasting and solemne humiliation joyned
 with Confession of sin, justifying of God in all the
 evils he had brought upon them, earnest deprecation of
 wrath, and supplications for a blessing that God would
 accept of their endeavours, and prosper his work
 against so many professed and secret Enemies. The se-
 cond was, a solemne Covenant: For the Princes and
 Rulers first, and then the people entred into a curse and
 an oath, to walk in Gods Law, and to observe and do
 all his commandments, judgements, and statutes. Here
 there was swearing, subscribing, sealing; and all means
 used which could bind their inconstant and fugitive
 hearts unto God. The third was, the doing of the work
 of God; the building of the Temple, the reformation of
 Religion, the ording of the worship & service of God,
 and the reedifying of the wals which were ruined & lying
 in heaps. Their fasting and praying was not sufficient,
 they behoved to enter into Covenant. Their praying
 and Covenanting was not enough, nor were they to rest
 there, They behoved to build and reforme. It hath
 pleased God to putt in your hearts, to give your selves
 to frequent fasting and humiliation, onely consider, whe-
 ther with the acknowledgment of your particular Sins
 and personall transgressions, yee have beene humbled
 for publike and Nationall Sinnes, and especially such as
 have beene committed about the worship of God, and

The first
mean.

The second
mean.

The third
mean.

the Government of the house of God. The Lord hath been much dishonoured this way, for this hath he entred in a controversie with the Land; this therefore would be confessed that God may be restored to his honour by your confession. It feareth me that a great part of the people of the Land are not yet brought to this Confession, but are still fond of a formall Service, and a proud Prelacie; and therefore as ye are your selves in humilitie to acknowledge this sin as a high provocation, so would all good meanes be used for bringing the people to the sight and sense of it. It is true, there is a secret and reall acknowledgement in the Covenant; but the Lord requireth a more direct, open, and plain confession; nor can he be pleased, or his wrath turned away, till that which hath been called and esteemed, for so many yeers, the glory and the beautie of the Church of England, be thus brought low and cast into the dust. It hath pleased the Lord also, to bring you a degree farder: That both the honourable Houses of Parliament, and many others, whose hearts the Lord hath toucht, have entred into a solemne League and Covenant, for performing such duties, as are judged necessarie at this time, for the honour of God, and for the deliverance and preservation of the Church and Kingdom, which no doubt will prove a pretious and powerfull mean of good, if the Name of the most high God, be not by it taken in vain: But take heed, that it be not forgotten by them that have taken it, before it be taken by others; And therefore two things would be looked unto. 1. That although it should never be taken by others, yet it obleigeth such as have entred in Covenant; and although the whole Nation, be bound to the same

same duties, which ye are bound unto, ye have entred into a new Obligation, which, if you shall forget or violate, will certainly be laid to your charge. *Jeremiah* reproveth Israel not for the transgression of the Law, Ier. 34. which yet commanded the same duties, but for violation of the Covenant. 2. That others be instructed and moved to enter into the same Covenant: for if they who have entred in Covenant shall not consider that it is a perpetuall Covenant never to be forgotten, or (which God forbid) shall forget their supervenient obligation, and others shall refuse to enter in Covenant, it will not onely make a division in the Church and Kingdom, but shall be a ready way to bring on a greater wrath, then yet hath been seen or felt: Upon one sort for their perfidy; and upon the other, for their neglect or obstinacy.

There is yet a third mean, without which the former two are not sufficient: And this is, *Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven*: A duty: which in it self is necessary; and which to us who live under the Gospel, is no other thing, but the reformation and setting of Religion. Wherein we are to consider. 1. the Rule of reformation, which is the *Commandment, Decree, or revealed will of God*. 2. The extent of this reformation, *whatsoever*. 3. How or after what manner we should go about this work, *diligently*. 4. The reasons, which should induce us to this duty: one is, from the greatness and sovereignty of God: *He is the God of heaven*. The other from common equity: *It is the house of the God of heaven*; and it is equitable that every man bear rule in his own house.

Considerations
about the
third mean.

1. The Rule of
Reformation.

The rule of building the house of God, and of the reformation of Religion, is the same and perpetually the commandment of God, and not the commandment of man one or moe, whether they be Civill or Ecclesiasticall persons. It is their part to provide according to their places and callings, to command and direct that the Commandment of God be obeyed. This King commandeth not that his will be done, but what God hath commanded. Neither King nor Parliament can command otherwise. Civill powers have great authoritie, not onely in things civill, but in matters of Religion; and they sin against God, if they use not the authority which God hath put in their hands, for the good of Religion. To them belongeth Inspection and watching over, not onely *Ecclesiasticos*, but *Ecclesiastica*. Ecclesiasticall persons are subject to Civill authoritie no lesse then others; and in respect of things Ecclesiasticall or matters of Religion, *Eusebius* brings in *Constantine* the great, saying: *Vos Episcopi in Ecclesia, ego extra Ecclesiam seu templum Episcopus a Deo constitutus sum*: Not that any mortall man whether Pope or Prince, can be properly Head of the Church, or Vicegerent unto Christ the Mediator in his speciell and oeconomicall Kingdom of Grace: for Princes are Vice-gerents to God, and to his Son Jesus Christ as he is God, in his universall Kingdom of Providence, and this watching and inspection of Princes and Magistrates, is *objective Ecclesiastica*, but *formaliter civilis*, it is about matters of Religion in a civill manner, and in a way suitable to the nature and qualitie of their place and power. The faithfull custody and preservation of Religion, is a part of their office:

office; for they are not onely keepers of the second, but of the first Table of the Law. To them appertaineth the vindication and defence of Religion, against contempt, corruption, and abuses. Religion also expecteth from them the Civill sanction, that the worship of God, and the wholesome constitutions of the Church about Religion, be confirmed and settled by their Laws. Coaction also is theirs, for they by their power are to constrain their Subjects to the duties of Religion, and to coerce and stop them that they do nothing to the contrary. They also may and ought to call Assemblies of the Church, when the case of Religion doth require, praeside as Civill Presidents, and examine Church-Constitutions, not onely as they are Christians for satisfying their own soules, but as Magistrates for the good of the people. And when there is a necessity of reformation of Religion, and the Ministry and Church-men, like the sands of the Sea-shore are covered with a deluge of defection and corruptions, they are by their Authority to endeavour a Reformation. And yet in all this exercise of their power, they are to do nothing but according to the Commandment of God: so *David, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, Josiah*, and other good and religious Princes have done. But when *Ieroboam* putteth his own commandment in place of the commandment of God, when *Abaz* setteth up the Altar of Damascus beside or in place of Gods Altar, when the Kings of Judah and Israel, did worship God, or did command the people to worship God, otherwise then God had commanded, wrath was upon the Kingdom of the King and his Sons.

When we consider of this, we have cause both to la- *Vse.*

ment and rejoyce : to lament, that through the working of corrupt Church-men so many things concerning the worship and house of God, should have been pressed upon the people of God, without or against his commandment, if Arminianisme for the soul and life, and Popish Service and Ceremonies for the body of Religion, had been received and admitted, as they were offered and obtruded, our condition had been more lamentable, then it is at this time, notwithstanding all our calamities and mi'eries. We have also cause to rejoyce, that in the one Kingdom a course hath been taken for doing every thing in the house of God, according to his Commandment, and that in this Kingdom it is ordered, that a wise and holy Assembly of Divines shall search diligently into the Word of God, *That whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, &c.*

2. The extent
of Reforma-
tion.

The extent of this Reformation is, *whatsoever God hath commanded* : for what God hath commanded must be done; what he hath forbidden must not be done, but abolished; and what is in the nature thereof indifferent must be regulated according to the Commandment of God, which is, no lesse plain and peremptory in our practise of things indifferent, then in other matters. Reformation therefore of Religion must be a through and perfect reformation. The particular reformations which were wrought by the Kings of Judah, are noted, and according to this rule, do they receive a testimony from God. Some onely destroyed the Temples of Baal, some the golden Calves of Dan and Bethel, and some also the groves and high places, and we know what approbation is given to *Hezekiah* and *Iosiah*. There is a promise made to such a through Reformation.

formation. *Azariah saith to Asa, Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded:** *By this shall the iniquitie of Iacob be purged,* ^{* 2 Chron. 19. 7.} *and this is all the fruit to take his sin: when he maketh all the stones of the Altar as chalk-stones that are beaten asunder.** *The Lord hath promised a more speciall blessing,* ^{* Isa. 27. 9. Isa. 1. 26, 27. 28} *Isa. 1. 26. I will restore thy Judges as at the first, and thy Counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called the City of righteousness, the faithfull City, &c.* The reason is, 1. Because God is not honoured by a begun, imperfect, and half-reformation. He is readie to spew out the luke-warme person, family, or people. If we love the Lord with all our heart and strength, we will do every thing that he commandeth: for what is it that hindreth, but that our heart is parted or divided betwixt two; and that we resolve, to be almost, but not altogether godly. 2. Because a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump, saith the Apostle to the Galathians, reproving them that having run well they did halt and not thoroughly obey the truth, and telling them, that this persuasion did not come of him that called them. ^{Galat. 5. 7, 8, 9.} When any known corruption is kept, it becomes a snare, and like a nest-egge, that bringeth us back again. I know this is censured for preciseness by the world: but we see the best servants of God have been such Precisians. Remember the hoof of *Moses*, *Mordecai* his bowing of his knee, *Daniel* his abstaining from idolatrous meat, and the opening of his window; *Paul* his houre and appearance of evil, with many more examples of this kind. They are Precisians indeed, who are liberall in the matters of God, and can find in their hearts to dispence with his commands, his truth and worship: but will

will not be content to want the least complement of their own worldly honour and dignitie, nor the smallest penny of their gaine and worldly commodity. Although it be true, that some things in Religion be fundamentall, and absolutely necessary unto salvation, and other things not so, yet to be obstinate against revealed truth, or to mis-regard or despise smallest matters of Religion, which are necessarie to be received, if not for themselves, yet for the authoritie of Scripture, (as some make the distinction) bringeth as certain a curse and condemnation, as ignorance and error doth in matters more substantiall.

Vse.

No Nation under the Sun hath more need to take heed to this then England: No persons have reason more to consider this, then the Honourable Houses of Parliament, who have in their hands the work of Reformation at this time. It is better known to this Honourable Audience, then to me; and yet who is so great a stranger that knoweth it not: that Reformation was begun in the time of two Princes? But because it was not a through Reformation according to the Commandment of God, Superstition and Idolatry returned again like an inundation. It was again begun and continued in the time of other two Princes; but because, they set up their rest in the Rudiments and beginnings of Reformation, Idolatry, Superstition, and Heresie have assayed to enter again with new strength and policie. Now the third time the work is begun, and there is a greater stir and shaking for it then before, either now endeavour to carry it through to every point of known perfection, doing whatsoever the God of heaven hath commanded, or look for nothing, but that Superstition

perdition and Idolstry, and with it ruine and desolation, shall come upon you as a flood.

And therefore, which is the third, go about the work after the manner here prescribed, that is *diligently*, which implyeth very much. 1. Sincerely, ayming at the right end without simulation. This is to do the work of God, for the honour of God, and good of Religion. And not for our glory or benefit, or for civill ends were they never so publick; And therefore it calleth not onely for publick, but for pious Spirits. Where this sinceritie is wanting, there may be a businesse and counterfeiting of diligence, but no true diligence or faithfulness. 2. Zealously: for true zeal is active, like fire, or like mettall in a horse, or like winde to the sails of a ship, it carrieth us on, and maketh us diligent. 3. Prudently; Prudence considereth both the opportunities and impediments of working, where Prudence is wanting, there may be precipitation, but no true diligence. 4. Speedily, without delay or procrastination. *As vineger to the teeth, and a smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him* *. The slouth-
ing and slipping of occasions bringeth despair of doing good in the end, and then our own consciences chide, and others to whom we should have done good, do curse us. *Solomons* house was not built in lesse then thirteen yeers, but the Temple was built in seven yeers: because, beside the preparation of materials, both the King and the people were more earnest about the one then the other. There is no want of materials at this time, onely speed is required; and without speed, no diligence. 5. Constantly; that no calumny or contradiction, no hope or fear, no trouble or example of

3. The manner of going about Reformation.

* Pro. 10. 26.

others, prevail with you, to leave your station, or desert the work unto the which the Lord hath called you, but that you resolve still to do, and, if the Lord will, to die. Let no man think by deserting the work and forsaking his station, that the work shall cease and he shall prosper. No, thou shalt find thy soul filled with grief and vexation upon two contrary grounds: One is, Thou shalt with a grieved and envious heart behold with thy eyes, the work to prosper, and thou not honoured to have a hand in it. The other is, Thou thy self shall perish in the end: *For as a bird that mandreth from her nest, so is a man that mandreth from his place.* Mark and consider what comfort they have found who have deserted this work of Reformation, whether in the one Kingdom or in the other. Thou thinkest, that thou wilt not hazard thy self for the honour of God: but God saith, he will not honour thee, to have heart or hand in his work, and thou shall run a greater hazard.

Pro. 27.8.

Reasons here-
of.
The first Reason.

There be two reasons secretly couched in the words to perswade and provoke unto this duty: The one is from the knowledge of the greatnesse and majestie of God, the other from the conscience of common equitie amongst men. Concerning the first: *Artaxerxes* was a great King: for in the beginning of his letter, he is honored with the title of *King of Kings*, as having many mightie Princes under his power; And in the end of the letter, he hath power of confiscation of goods, imprisonment, banishment, and death: Yet he acknowledgeth one greater then the greatest whom he calleth *the God of heaven*, thereby to expresse his greatnesse, majestie, and glory, which made him to give forth this Decree, and by which he would move all men

men to do diligently what he commandeth: For the knowledge and apprehension of the greatnesse and Majestic of God, especially compared with our basenesse, is a powerfull mean, to move us to obey his Commandments, and to go diligently about the affairs of his House. The Lord is great eminently and infinitely above the creature: he is the originall of all created greatnesse, and nothing can be conceived in him, which may be the least diminution of his greatnesse and Majestic. It is not so with men. When he is to give his Law to his people, he first manifesteth his greatnesse by his wonders in Egypt, by bringing them miraculously through the Red sea, and by the Terrors of Mount Sinai, and then he beginneth, *I am the Lord thy God that brought thee, &c.* When he speaketh to his Prophets, to make them diligent and faithfull, he useth this Preface: *Thus saith the Lord.* When he sendeth *Isaiah* with his message, he beginneth with a vision of his glory: *I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his traine filled the Temple. &c.* When he will have men to tremble at his word, *Thus saith the Lord, the heavens is my Throne, and the earth is my footstool.* When he revealed himself to *John* his servant, he sheweth his greatnesse, *Revel. 4. and 7.* If the greatest of the children of men did consider that he is higher then the highest, *Eccles. 5. 8.* that in his hand is there breath, and all their wayes, as *Daniel* telleth a great King that went before *Artaxerxes*, *Dan. 5. 23.* That in his sight when once he is angrie, no creature can stand. *Psal. 76. 7.* They would not by any sin, and least of all by dealing deceitfully in the matters of his House, provoke him to anger. *Woe unto him that stri-*

Isa. 6. 1, 2, 3, 4

Isa. 46. 1.